

A  
FUNERAL ORATION

IN HONOUR OF

Miss JEANY MUIR,

A Celebrated LADY of PLEASURE:

BY

Miss BETTY MONTGOMERY,

Her dear Friend and Successor.

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AMSTERDAM.

[Price TWO-PENCE]

TUNNELL ORATION

IN HONOR OF

MRS JEANNY MUIR

A GRACIOUS LADY OF THE 18TH CENTURY

BY



MRS BETTY MUIR

—————

AND ST. D. A. M.

[Two Lines]

## P R E F A C E.

**E**Loquence is the noblest faculty of the human mind, and has ever been held in such veneration, that, we may observe, the highest rewards have been in all ages conferred upon it. Riches, honours, esteem, admiration, and immortality, have never failed to crown the labours of those, on whom nature has bestowed an extraordinary share of that talent. The names of Demosthenes and Cicero are mentioned with as much respect, as those of Alexander and Pompey, and the former have, with their tongues, established for themselves, a reputation more lasting, than the latter have been able to do, with all the power and wealth of the Grecian and Roman empire. The philippics of the two first are still entire, and charm mankind as much at this moment, as the first hour they were delivered; while the mighty empires established by the two last, at the expence of so much blood and labour, have changed very frequently their masters: and those barbarians, who overturned the Roman state, have luckily left us unimpaired, the glorious productions of the Ro-

man orator. Britain is said, by some modern writer, to be almost the only nation in Europe, where there is room for an unbounded exercise of that faculty. By eloquence, in parliament, we assert our liberty, against the united attacks of despotism and corruption; by eloquence, in the civil courts, we defend our property from the depredations of rapine and injustice; and in the criminal courts, we vindicate our character, from the stains of calumny, and our lives from the daringness of accusation; and by eloquence our clergy have long stemmed the current of prevailing infidelity and immorality. But still the fairest field of eloquence seems to be unknown, or at least unattempted amongst us. The merits of the deceased ought not to be buried in oblivion, and it is a tribute justly due to the memory of those, who have done eminent services to mankind, to celebrate their virtues after their death; and the duration of our gratitude ought at least to be proportioned to that of their services.—Funeral orations were very frequent in Rome, and every warrior, who died in the cause of his country, had a harangue pronounced over his dead body, by his dearest friend, or by the ablest orator, commemorating the virtues of the deceased, and commanding the tears and sorrow of those who survived. This may be

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one great reason why we see those heroes were ever ready to resign their life in defence of their country; and surely it was a most agreeable reflection to think, that a man only quitted the scene himself to make way for the celebration of his virtues. Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei vitabit libitinam.

The French have long cultivated this species of eloquence, and some of their writers, notwithstanding the disadvantages of a feeble circumlocutive language, have made a wonderful progress in it. Their superiority to us in this point reflects no dishonour however upon us; and may rather be accounted for from the difference of our governments, than from the odds of our geniuses. Born in a country where passive obedience constitutes all the merit of a citizen, debarred from exerting their talents in the cause of liberty and independence, that people, naturally lively and ingenious, have turned the course of their eloquence towards the composition of panegyric; and have lavished upon the dead, those praises, which their monarch would not, without jealousy, have seen conferred upon the living.

This attempt to introduce amongst us the only species of eloquence that we are ignorant of, will not I hope be ill received. The author little thought of ever appearing in print; but to have let this opportunity escape, would

would have argued ingratitude towards that person who is the subject of the following oration, as well as indifference towards her countrymen, who may be roused perhaps from their supineness, to take some pains in the cultivation of this useful talent ; so that we may hope one day to see, in this kingdom, some productions, worthy of being put in competition with those of Bossuet, Flechier, or Bourdaloue. The author has endeavoured to be as much original as possible, and as she does not recollect any one who has writ upon the same plan, so she hopes none will do her the injustice to suspect her of plagiarism. Whatever shall be the fate of the work, she will always have the home-felt satisfaction to think, that her intention was purely meant to serve the public : a reflection that must always be consolatory to the author of the worst received performance.

# A Funeral Oration, &c.

*Gentlemen and Ladies,*

WHEN I first heard the melancholy news of the death of the worthy JEANY MUIR, I formed the design of assembling this company. I thought I could, I was sure I could, be eloquent in the praises of a person for whom I had so great a regard; but upon more serious and deliberate consideration, I began to fear that I, who ~~have been~~ so long engaged in the practice of the *mute art*, might perhaps fail in doing that justice to her character which it deserved; and therefore I shall content myself with giving you a brief account of the most material and interesting particulars of her life; and shall endeavour to observe as exact a medium as possible betwixt the fulsome flattery of a panegyrist, and the dull veracity of a historian.

*(Here she pulls out a coloured handkerchief, in place of a white one.)*

JEANY MUIR was born in the Canon-gate on the 12th of August 1728, of a parentage justly revered in that part of the town for their virtue and sobriety. Her forefathers

thers had been in some measure hereditary  
 keepers of a billiard-table, and her mother  
 no inconsiderable member of that profession  
 in which her daughter was destined to make  
 so eminent a figure. With these advantages  
 we need not doubt but the young mind of  
 our heroine, which began already to display  
 some very early symptoms of genius and vi-  
 gour, would be *imbued* with every part of  
 necessary instruction. It happened indeed  
 somewhat unlucky for Miss Jeany Muir, that  
 public h——y houses were not established in  
 this metropolis, upon that sure and honoura-  
 ble footing which they have since been; so  
 that our young adventurer had not an oppor-  
 tunity of hearing those precepts and lectures  
 which are commonly read in such seminaries  
 of learning. But although nobody had more  
 faith than she in the benefit to be reaped  
 from this method of instruction, yet she was  
 convinced, that, to a mind like hers, rapaci-  
 ous of knowledge, the practice itself might  
 contain every thing useful and necessary. She  
 justly reasoned with herself, that the theory  
 of the art was no more than a set of rules  
 and maxims drawn by the wise and sagacious  
 practitioners, from that variety of cases which  
 occur in the course of a long practice; and  
 as a great promptitude of genius commonly  
 inspires confidence and sufficiency, she con-  
 cluded,



cluded, that there was no good reason why she might not gather that knowledge from the subjects themselves, rather than submit to the drudgery of conning over the works of those, who possessed no greater abilities than she. The one was becoming wise at second hand, and by reflection; wisdom in the other case was drawn pure from the very source itself. She therefore had not Mæursius, nor Rochester so frequently in her hands, as some other pieces no less fit for her improvement.

One happy circumstance however amply recompensed all the disadvantages under which our heroine was born: Hannah Marine was then alive, and in the greatest reputation for capacity and skill in her profession; she contracted an early prejudice in favours of Miss Jeany Muir; she had too much penetration not to discover, though only in the bud, those talents of our heroine's, which disclosed themselves so amazingly afterwards, and too little of the jealousy or rivalry of her sex to depress her rising genius, or to misguide her ill-directed curiosity. She formed a design of rearing her up for a successor; and for that purpose carried her to all her gossipings, introduced her to many private retailers of spirits, discovered to her the most secret turnpikes; and instructed her in all her

arts of duping a cully, and of spunging a fob. By her advice Jeany Muir took the resolution of visiting foreign parts. Her first excursion was to Gl—f—w, a city justly celebrated for the devotion and impiety of its inhabitants. It was there she first learned the use of strong spirits, and the uselessness of beds. She there formed the closest intimacy with some of the oldest students, and youngest professors of the university, which were of great use to her through the rest of her life. This little flight which she made, purely to try the strength of her pinions, was only a prelude to her other travels; she visited Covent-Garden, the English, German, and some add the French camps, in Flanders, and the speel-houses in Amsterdam; beginning by this time to alter her plan, and conferring as much pleasure as she received.

The love however of one's country is too natural a passion not to have had a large place in Jeany Muir's breast: and that, joined to a certain restlessness and appetite for new pleasures, common in people of her profession and genius, brought her home, notwithstanding the repeated solicitations of many a foreign friend to remain in those countries. She luckily returned to her native country just at a period, when Heriot Marine's great fatigue, joined to some diseases to which the well-employed

employed practitioners in the *mute art* are frequently exposed, had reduced her to the disagreeable alternative of either resigning her business, or of being deserted by her employers. Her friendship for her young favourite was founded on too sure a basis to be shaken in the least by Jeany's absence; she received her with open arms, and calling for a gill of brandy, drunk to her as her successor, with nearly the same ceremony the mayor of London uses in appointing his sheriffs.

I do not pretend to say, that the practitioners in our profession are entirely faultless, it would be false and absurd if I did. It must be remembered, that though we are wh—es, still we are women, and though our employment purges us of many female weaknesses, yet still some few will remain. Upon this principle it was natural to expect among the elder practitioners a general dissatisfaction and opposition to our young intransigent, as they no doubt were vexed to see the whole of that business, which before had run in so many different channels, now collected into one great stream, and flowing like a torrent upon this upstart interloper. But no such thing happened. Envy's snaky head was scarce heard to hiss. And we unanimously agreed, that Jeany Muir was more than able to bear

that load of business with which she was soon to be burthened.

This is now the most conspicuous æra of our heroine's life. Behold her now, my gentle hearers, arrived at the zenith of her glory! Behold her practising her art with most surprising success! enriching herself, and diffusing blessings and pleasures over all the *wide circle* of her acquaintance, and even exciting sentiments of vanity in the bosoms of her relations, proud to be connected with a lady now become the favourite of half the human race!

And here I must again have recourse to my philosophy, to justify a part of her conduct, which her greatest admirers would sometimes censure. Some philosophers have carried their scepticism so far as to affirm, that there is nothing real in nature, and that every thing is deception: whatever we see, whatever we hear, whatever we touch, say they, we do not really see, hear, or touch, but are imposed upon by our senses, and only fancy we do. What truth may be in this observation as to the material world, I shall leave to naturalists to determine; but in the ideal world I may venture, without being contradicted, to aver, that deceptions are very frequent and very dangerous. Why does the miser perpetrate the blackest villainies to fill his purse, and centers all his happiness in his wealth?—because he



is deceived. Why is such a young advocate vain of his abilities?—because he is deceived. Why does yonder graceless knight drink and game perpetually, and yet imagines his estate is not impaired?—because he is deceived. And why does a certain fine lady think the world are ignorant of what she wishes they may not know?—but because she is deceived. Our heroine, sensible of the prevalence of deception, and convinced if it were rooted out of the world, mankind would commit many fewer absurdities and crimes than they do, made a noble opposition to this general torrent of deceit. So strongly are mankind prone to be deluded, that they are sometimes disappointed, when they are not. This observation is never more fully verified than in some parts of Miss Jeany Muir's profession, where a cold return to the endearments of her friends, was the behaviour in the world most likely to occasion *dryness*, and to disjoin the closest unions.

*Tu quoque, cui veneris sensum natura negavit,  
Dulcia mendaci gaudia finge sono.*

*Infelix, cui torpet hebes locus ille, puella es,  
Quo pariter debent femina, virq; frui,  
Ah pudet! —————*

Upon these occasions, as our heroine never felt any tendency towards a reciprocal  
passion,

passion, so she never would affect any, and chose rather to offend by a calm lifeless behaviour, than to please by the most innocent deceit. And it is only from her aversion to hypocrisy and dissimulation, that I can account for this tranquility and quietism in our heroine's conduct.

It is incumbent upon me too to make honourable mention of Jeany Muir's generosity, the quality which predominated most strongly in her disposition. This however, though a true, might, I fear, turn a disagreeable part of our funeral oration; as I see few of one sex here who do not retain some marks of her generosity. But it would be unjust to her memory to omit, that though she had frequent occasion to be employed by a very numerous and very respectable body of men, yet she never would consent to accept of any of their money; and as she was ever ready to lend them her assistance, so was she ever obstinate in refusing their remunerations. I should likewise give a particular account of the care she took of her own health, and the dexterity with which she warded off those diseases with which she was threatened, either from her constitution, or from the fatigues of her business, without at the same time ever ceasing to be useful in the exercise of it.

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As to her children, the assiduity of her calling prevented the world from being blessed with any of these. But I should do injustice to the memory of Jeany Muir, as well as violate my own conscience, if I concealed from you, that in examining her trunk, after she died, I discovered a pair of abortions carefully preserved in spirits. Were not your patience already quite exhausted, I should give you a minute description of them; but suffice it to say, that in every feature, and in every limb, I could trace an exact resemblance to their mother, and so far as I could then judge, they promised to have been every way worthy of so celebrated a parent.

Her death was sudden, as she herself wished it to be. She survived none of her faculties. Three of her friends had just left her, and were thoroughly satisfied with their reception. So gentle was the first attack of that distress, which soon after proved fatal, that she did not shut any of the books that were lying before her. Two were found open on her table; for it is remarkable, as she had but little time to devote to study, she employed it to the greatest advantage, by commonly perusing a couple of books at a time, one with each eye. That which lay next her right eye, I presume she was engaged to read, from the pompousness of its  
title



title page, which promised her some satisfactory account of the great inequalities which she found among men. The other was a favourite author, open at the following passage,

Contra alios nullum, nisi obenti in fornice stantem.  
 Quidam potus homo cum esset fornice, Maeste  
 Virtute esto, inquit, sanctissimus, si Catonem;  
 Nam si cum ac venis in levis tetra libido,  
 Hunc juvenes rident, et despicere, non alianas  
 Perpetrare mores.

Upon the whole, if her life was useful,  
 her end below was fulfilled:

FINIS.